CLAIMS

1. A method to control printing of a document file delivered via a computer network comprising the steps of:

at a first computer:

encrypting at least a first portion of a document file using at least a first encryption key thereby creating a partially encrypted file;

transmitting the partially encrypted file to a second computer via said computer network;

at said second computer:

printing at least a second portion of said partially encrypted file using a serialized print methodology;

returning to said first computer at least a serialized print number, and receiving, in response thereto, said first encryption key;

decrypting said first portion of said partially encrypted file to create a decrypted document file; and

printing said decrypted document file.

2. A method in accordance with the method of claim 1 wherein said step of returning further comprises the step of providing payment.

3. A method in accordance with the method of claim 1 further including steps of:

before transmitting the partially encrypted file to a second computer, encrypting at least part of said partially encrypted file to form a twice-encrypted file using a second encryption key; and

prior to printing at least a second portion of said partially decrypted file, decrypting said twice-encrypted file using at least one of either said second encryption key or a third encryption key.

4. A method in accordance with the method of claim 1 wherein said serialized print methodology includes the steps of:

generating by a device printing said decrypted document file, a number correlating said decrypted document file to said printing device;

returning said number to said first computer thereby enabling said second computer to receive said first key.

5. A method in accordance with the method of claim 1 further including the step of printing at least a portion of said partially decrypted document file using a guaranteed print methodology.

6. A system for controlling the printing of a document file delivered via a computer network comprising:

a first computer that encrypts at least a first portion of a document file using a first key;

a data transfer device coupled said first computer capable of transferring the partially encrypted document file to a second computer;

a print mechanism operatively coupled to said data transfer device, said print mechanism capable of receiving said document file and decrypting at least a portion of said first portion of said document file and printing said first portion using a serialized print methodology.

7. The system of claim 6 wherein said print mechanism is comprised of a computer operatively coupled to a printer.

8. The system of claim 6 wherein said print mechanism is comprised of a printer capable of generating serialized output.

9. The system of claim 6 wherein said print mechanism is comprised of a printer capable of guaranteeing output print quality.

10. Apparatus for controlling the printing of a document file delivered via a computer network, comprising:

a first computer coupled to a data transfer mechanism, said first computer capable of receiving via said data transfer mechanism, at least one partially encrypted document file from a second computer;

a print mechanism operatively coupled to said first computer, said print mechanism being capable printing at least a portion of said partially encrypted document file using a serialized print methodology.

11. Apparatus for controlling the printing of a document file delivered via a computer network comprising:

a first computer coupled to a data transfer mechanism, said first computer capable of receiving via said data transfer mechanism, at least one partially encrypted document file from a second computer; and

a print mechanism operatively coupled to said first computer, said print mechanism being capable printing at least a portion of said partially encrypted document file using a guaranteed print methodology.

12. A method of controlling the printing of a document delivered via a computer network comprising the steps of:

printing a first portion of the document, said first portion being unencrypted;

communicating, via the computer network, with an entity associated with the document to arrange for the printing of a remaining portion of the document

receiving, as a result of said communicating step, an encrypted remaining portion of the document;

decrypting said remaining portion; and

printing said decrypted remaining portion.

13. A method in accordance with the method of claim 12 wherein said communicating step further comprises the step of providing payment to said entity.

14. A method in accordance with the method of claim 12 wherein said communicating step further comprises the step of ascertaining quality of said printed first portion.

15. A method in accordance with the method of claim 12 further comprises the step of generating a number correlating said document to a printing device printing said first portion.

16. A method in accordance with the method of claim 15 wherein said step of communicating further comprises the step of communicating said generated number.

17. A method of controlling the printing of a document delivered via a computer network to a user, comprising of the steps of:

encrypting a portion of the document;

transmitting an unencrypted portion of the document via the computer network to the user for printing;

receiving a communication related to a reception of said unencrypted portion by the user; and

transmitting said encrypted portion of the document to the user via the computer network in response to said receiving step.

18. A method in accordance with the method of claim 17 wherein said receiving step further comprises the step of receiving a payment for the document.

19. A method in accordance with the method of claim 17 wherein said receiving step further comprises the step of receiving a proof that said unencrypted portion of the document was satisfactorily printed

20. A method of controlling the printing of a partially encrypted document file delivered via a computer network, at least a first portion of which partially encrypted document is encrypted using at least a first encryption key, comprising the steps of:

printing at least a second portion of the partially encrypted document file;

creating a serialized print number and returning the serialized print number via the computer network;

receiving the first encryption key;

decrypting the first portion to create a decrypted document file; and

printing said decrypted document file

21. A method in accordance with the method of claim 20 further comprising the step of providing payment for the partially encrypted document.

22. A method in accordance with the method of claim 20 wherein at least part of the partially encrypted document file is further encrypted to form a twice-encrypted file using a second encryption key, further comprising the step of prior to printing at least a second portion of said partially decrypted document file, decrypting said twice-encrypted file using at least said second encryption key.

23. A method in accordance with the method of claim 21 wherein said step of creating a serialized print number further comprises the step of generating, by a device printing said decrypted document file, a number correlating said decrypted document file to said printing device.